

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USBERLIN
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E.O. 11652: N/A
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SUBJECT: SCHEEL SETS GERMAN UNITY INTO PERSPECTIVE

BEGIN SUMMARY. PRESIDENT SCHEEL, IN A SPEECH BEFORE
THE BUNDESTAG ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORKERS'
UPRISING IN EAST GERMANY, SET THE QUESTION OF GERMAN
UNITY INTO HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE. HE URGED THE
GERMAN PEOPLE TO RELY UPON HISTORY AND THEIR OWN FEELING
OF TOGETHERNESS TO REALIZE THE GOAL OF UNITY, WHICH
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HE TERMED THE CENTRAL PROBLEM OF THE GERMAN PEOPLE.
IN THE MEANTIME, HE HELD A POLICY OF PEACE AND JUSTICE
TO BE THE BEST MEANS OF NURTURING THE IDEA OF UNITY AND
DIMINISHING THE HISTORICAL MISTRUST OF GERMANY'S
NEIGHBORS.

MANY OBSERVERS HERE SEE SCHEEL'S ADDRESS AS SYMBOLIC

OF A GROWING FEELING IN THE FRG THAT GERMANS, TOO, HAVE A RIGHT TO BE PROUD OF THEIR NATION. WE BELIEVE SCHEEL IS AWARE OF THIS PHENOMENON AND THAT HE TRIED IN HIS SPEECH TO TAP ITS POSITIVE ASPECTS AND WARN AGAINST ITS DANGERS. HIS VISION OF GERMAN UNITY AND THE POLICY BY WHICH TO PURSUE IT SEEMS TO US TO REPRESENT A DEVELOPING CONSENSUS ON A QUESTION WHICH HAS BEEN GROWING IN THE

FEDERAL REPUBLIC IN RECENT YEARS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN A THOUGHTFUL ADDRESS JUNE 17 IN COMMEMORATION OF "THE DAY OF GERMAN UNITY," PRESIDENT SCHEEL SET THE GOAL OF GERMAN UNITY INTO HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND OFFERED HIS CONCEPTION OF THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH IT COULD BE ATTAINED. (FULL TEXT POUCHED TO BERLIN AND EUR/CE.) UNITY, HE CAUTIONED, COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED AGAINST THE WILL OF THE SOVIET UNION. THAT COUNTRY'S HISTORICAL MISTRUST -- AND THAT OF GERMANY'S OTHER NEIGHBORS, EAST AND WEST -- COULD ONLY BE OVERCOME BY A POLICY OF PEACE AND JUSTICE.

2. THROUGHOUT HIS SPEECH, PRESIDENT SCHEEL URGED PATIENCE UPON THE GERMAN PEOPLE, NOTING THAT THE UNITY OF GERMANY WOULD BE THE RESULT OF A LONG HISTORICAL PROCESS. HE WAS OPTIMISTIC, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD BE ACHIEVED EVENTUALLY. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GREATEST PART OF THE GERMAN PEOPLE TODAY WERE LIVING IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC AND THAT THE FEELING OF

"ONENESS" AMONG GERMANS WAS SO GREAT THAT IT TOOK A WALL AND BARBEDWIRE TO KEEP THEM APART. SUCH A DESIRE ON THE PART OF ONE PEOPLE TO LIVE TOGETHER REPRESENTED A GREAT HISTORICAL FORCE.

2. PRESIDENT SCHEEL WARNED AGAINST ALLOWING THE GOAL OF UNITY TO TAKE ON A "RESTORATIONIST" CAST. NOT "REUNIFICATION," NOT FORGOTTEN DREAMS OF A "REICH", BUT A UNIFIED GERMANY AS AN EQUAL MEMBER IN A UNITED EUROPE WAS THE GOAL.

4. CONCLUDING, PRESIDENT SCHEEL TURNED TO A SPECIFIC PROBLEM: THE LACK OF INSTRUCTION ABOUT THE UNITY OF GERMANY IN THE SCHOOLS OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. IT WAS TRUE, HE SAID, THAT THE CONCEPT HAD BEEN TERRIBLY MISUSED, BUT IT NEVERTHELESS REMAINED THE CENTRAL PROBLEM OF THE GERMAN PEOPLE. THE IDEA OF GERMANY WAS TOO IMPORTANT TO BE LEFT TO RIGHT WING RADICALS WITH ALL THE CONSEQUENCES THAT COULD HAVE. HE THUS URGED

STATE GOVERNMENTS AND TEACHERS TO ASSURE THAT SCHOOL

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CHILDREN LEARNED THE HISTORY AND COMPLEXITIES OF
GERMAN UNITY.

5. COMMENT: AS FAR AS THE PRESS WAS CONCERNED,
SCHEEL'S REMARKS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN LOST IN THE CROWD
OF SPEECHES ON GERMAN UNITY ALWAYS MADE IN THE FRG
ON JUNE 17. AMONG SOPHISTICATED POLITICAL OBSERVERS,
HOWEVER, HIS ADDRESS HAS BEEN THE SOURCE OF CONSIDERABLE
INTEREST. THEY HAVE SEEN IT AS SYMBOLIC OF THE GROWING
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BELIEF IN THE FRG THAT GERMANS, TOO, HAVE A RIGHT TO BE PROUD OF THEIR NATION. THERE IS ALWAYS THE DANGER, OF COURSE, THAT A CONCEPT AS SUBTLE AS SCHEEL'S MAY BE MISUNDERSTOOD, IN HIS WORDS, AS "RESTORATIONIST." HE WAS CLEARLY LESS INTERESTED IN REHABILITATION THAN IN REDEFINITION.

6. WE SEE SCHEEL'S ADDRESS AS AN IMPORTANT AND CLEAR EXPRESSION OF THE CONSENSUS ABOUT THE NATURE OF GERMAN UNITY WHICH HAS BEEN GROWING UP SLOWLY HERE FOR ABOUT THE LAST FIVE YEARS. IT TOOK A FEW YEARS FOR THE

CDU/CSU TO ACCEPT THE "OSTPOLITIK" OF THE SPD-FDP GOVERNING COALITION, ITSELF THE PRODUCT OF A LONG MATURATION, BUT TODAY ALL PARTIES RECOGNIZE THAT THE ADJUSTMENTS MADE AT THE TURN OF THE DECADE WERE NECESSARY IF GERMANS EAST AND WEST WERE NOT TO GROW COMPLETELY APART.

7. THERE ARE, OF COURSE, DIFFERENCES OF NUANCE AMONG THE PARTIES. AT TIMES THE CDU/CSU RHETORIC COULD MISLEAD ONE TO BELIEVE THAT THEY WOULD PURSUE A MUCH HARDER COURSE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE GDR AND THE SOVIET UNION THAN THE PRESENT COALITION. PRESIDENT SCHEEL ARGUED THE FUTILITY OF THIS.

8. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SPD, WHICH IN ITS HISTORY HAS SUFFERED SO MUCH FROM RADICAL NATIONALISTS, HAS OCCASIONALLY GIVEN THE IMPRESSION THAT GERMAN NATIONALISM WAS A REFUGE FOR RIGHT-WING RADICALS. HERE PRESIDENT SCHEEL ALSO WARNED THAT THE ESPOUSAL OF SUCH AN ATTITUDE COULD BECOME A SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY.

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THE GOAL OF GERMAN UNITY, HE SAID, MUST BE KEPT ALIVE, BUT IT MUST REPRESENT A PROGRESSIVE RATHER THAN A RETROGRADE IDEA.

9. PRESIDENT SCHEEL, LIKE MANY OTHERS, SENSES THE POSSIBILITY THAT REUNIFICATION COULD BECOME A POWERFUL POLITICAL IDEAL IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC NOW THAT SUCH OTHER POLITICAL IDEALS AS THE ATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP OR EUROPEAN UNIFICATION HAVE LOST SOME OF THEIR GLOSS AND NOW THAT ECONOMIC PROSPERITY HAS SHOWN ITSELF TO OFFER LITTLE MORAL SATISFACTION. WHAT SCHEEL WAS

ATTEMPTING TO DO IN THIS SPEECH WAS TO CAST THE DRIVE
FOR GERMAN UNITY ALONG AN UNAGGRESSIVE COURSE THAT
WOULD MAKE IT APPEAR LESS THREATENING
TO THOSE STATES WHO REMAIN ABLE TO PREVENT IT. WE
ASSUME THAT OTHER POLITICAL FIGURES HERE WILL ECHO
SCHEEL'S THOUGHTS IN THE FUTURE WITH MUCH THE SAME
PURPOSE. STOESSEL

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